



City Hall  
Alexandria, Virginia

*Alexandria Waterfront Committee*  
*Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities*  
*1108 Jefferson Street*  
*Alexandria, Virginia 22314*



**Statement to Alexandria City Council**  
**Public Hearing on Draft Waterfront Small Area Plan**  
May 14, 2011

Mr. Mayor and members of City Council, my name is Nathan Macek. I am the chair of the Alexandria Waterfront Committee, a Citywide body established by City Council to address issues relating to private and commercial uses of the waterfront. Today, I will provide my Committee's comments on the Waterfront Plan.

Over the past two years, the Waterfront Committee and its individual members have collaborated with City staff and our fellow residents to create the Plan recently endorsed by the Planning Commission. Throughout the plan-making process, the Waterfront Committee offered critical feedback on multiple drafts of the Plan.

We believe a new Plan is necessary to guide future development and civic investments. We have long advocated for development and enactment of a new Plan, and believe it is essential to establish guidelines for future development before any specific projects are proposed. Today's Waterfront does not meet its full potential to serve residents or improve the City's economy. Existing infrastructure is aging and needs to be revitalized for the area to be competitive with neighboring waterfronts. A Waterfront Plan will assist in addressing these shortcomings.

As I noted before the Planning Commission on April 5, we believe the Plan will renew the Alexandria Waterfront. It accomplishes several key objectives urged by stakeholders, including:

- Creating a continuous pedestrian pathway along waterfront;
- Sensitively integrating nuisance flood mitigation measures;
- Incorporating the Alexandria Waterfront Public Art Proposal and the Alexandria Waterfront History Plan; and
- Balancing new areas of economic vitality with quiet places for contemplating the water.

The Waterfront Committee also supports the Plan's concept for Fitzgerald Square, which would serve as a central hub tying together existing Waterfront amenities with King Street. Without the central anchor that Fitzgerald Square provides, other worthwhile public improvements contemplated by the Plan will not have a meaningful linkage. Realizing this vision, however, will require leadership by City Council. We encourage the City to continue negotiations with the Old Dominion Boat Club, especially when reasonable alternatives exist.

We have previously written the Planning Commission regarding several key issues to be considered prior to adoption of the Plan. Some of these have been resolved, but others, regarding parking, redevelopment, and the marina concept, remain. While there is much to commend about this Plan, the schedule for debate and action has not permitted our Committee to consider the revised draft that emerged from the Planning Commission meeting last week and revisit our concerns.

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Therefore, we welcome the decision to allow additional time to consider the plan. We'll be meeting on Tuesday morning to resume discussion on the plan, and will host our annual Waterfront Walk—Saturday, June 11, 2011 beginning at 9:00 a.m. at the bulkhead in Windmill Hill Park and proceeding north to Oronoco Bay Park—to review the Waterfront core area and consider the proposed plan first-hand.

We believe that this delay will result in a stronger plan in the long-run, and look forward to providing detailed feedback soon.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.